

The Cleveland Museum of Art
ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

FULL NAME: James M. McCarthy **PRESENT POSITION:** News editor

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 1/15/53, Berea, Ohio

CATEGORY/PRIMARY MEDIA: Photography

ART TRAINING: University of Southern Maine, B.A., 1982.
"Master" workshops with Melissa Shook, Maine Photographic Workshops, Rockport, Maine, 1976, 1977.

EXHIBITIONS IN WHICH YOUR WORK HAS BEEN SHOWN:

May Show, Cleveland Museum of Art -- 1993, 1979, 1975, 1974
Center for the Arts at the Chocolate Church, Bath, Maine, juried photography exhibition -- 1992, 1991.
Portland Performing Arts Center, Portland, Maine, one-person exhibition -- February 1984.
Portland Public Library, Portland, Maine, one-person exhibition -- December 1983.
Portland Public Library, one-person exhibition -- 1978.
New Organization for Visual Artists, Cleveland, Ohio, juried photography exhibition -- 1976.
Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio, juried photography exhibition -- 1975.
Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, Ohio, one-person exhibition in theater lobby -- 1975.
New Organization for Visual Artists, Cleveland, Ohio, juried "student show" -- 1974.

COLLECTIONS THAT NOW INCLUDE YOUR WORK: None.

AWARDS: None.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: My photograph included in the 1993 May Show, entitled "Raymond, Patrick and goats, Co. Sligo, Ireland," is part of a much larger work -- a photo-documentary of a small townland called Dernaskeagh in Ireland's rugged and sparsely populated western region. As such, its "message" as a single image may suffer somewhat from the lack of context and interplay with the 40 to 50 other images now included in the documentary. Still, I think the image can stand on its own as an

evocation of the common childhood experience of being lost in thought, in nature, removed from the influences, duties and cares of one's family. It may evoke, as well, that experience of childhood when one's life seems to extend like an endless ribbon of time off to the future, a mystery still to be explored, a potential yet to be fulfilled. So there's a bit of romanticism, perhaps, in the image. Less evident (at least when this image is taken out of the photo-document as a whole) are the social forces threatening the childhood dreams of my cousin's 14-year-old son and his friend: Ireland's staggering poverty and unemployment (still at 20 percent) and the government's efforts to convert the cattle-growing fields in its western region into forest land. The farming apprenticeship of these two boys, then, may never find the opportunities to fulfill, in the traditional way, the skills being learned in childhood.

As a photographer, I've moved from my earlier pursuit of classical landscapes (in the tradition of Edward Weston, Ansel Adams, Minor White et. al) toward more of a social documentary emphasis. I must credit Walter Rosenblum, my friend and mentor for the last 12 years, for inspiring and encouraging this change of direction. Rosenblum, a member of the now defunct Photo League and one of America's master photo-documentarians, has helped me see how photography can be used to pursue the real work of breaking down the prejudices, ignorance and "blindness" that foster poverty, environmental degradation and war. He has deepened my appreciation of photography's richness as a medium of artistic expression, sharing freely the lessons he learned from his artistic mentors, Lewis Hine and Paul Strand.

As my unfinished Ireland project might suggest, I am particularly interested in depicting the struggles of traditional "small" farmers, who are, virtually everywhere, threatened by economic forces favoring consolidation of so-called inefficient farms and greater mechanization on the resulting larger farms.

My photography is, then, a way to express my love and admiration for ordinary people confronting with great courage the changes that threaten their traditional way of life. After almost 25 years of practice, it still challenges me. It is a good "friend" -- one which I hope to keep for many years to come.

May 29, 1993
34 Franklin Parkway
Brunswick, Maine
04011

The Cleveland Museum of Art
11150 East Blvd.
Cleveland, Ohio 44106-1797
attn. Tom Hinson, curator of contemporary art

Dear Mr. Hinson:

Enclosed is a completed "artist biography" as requested by the museum following acceptance of my photograph in this year's May Show. I took the liberty of duplicating the museum's Standard form on my Macintosh: it's due to my clumsiness using typewriters and desire to submit a statement without numerous swatches of 'white-out' to distract the reader.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement for your files.

I look forward to seeing the 1993 May Show when I pay a visit to my family in Cleveland this summer!

Thanks, again.

Sincerely,
James McCarthy

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

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Please complete and return the following questionnaire for our reference file on Cleveland Artists.

FULL NAME: James Michael McElarthy

DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 1-15-53 Berea, Ohio

PRIMARY MEDIA ① photography ② watercolor

ART TRAINING - Schools, Scholarships, etc.:

I am primarily a self-taught photographer.
Attended workshops with Melissa Shook at The Maine Photographic
Workshops: 1974
1975

EXHIBITIONS IN WHICH YOUR WORK HAS BEEN SHOWN: Cleveland Museum of Art May Show: 1974
Butler Institute Photography Annual: 1975 1975
N. O. V. A. Juried photography exhibition 1976
ONE MAN Show Baldwin Wallace College (Theatre Arts Bldg.) 1976
Boothbay Region Art Gallery: 2 paintings 1977 MAINE
ONE MAN Show (photographs) Portland (Maine) Public Library Apr. 1978

COLLECTIONS WHICH NOW INCLUDE YOUR WORK:

AWARDS:

PRESENT POSITION: formerly medical photographer - now a full time student
at The University of Southern Maine

We would appreciate any information regarding subsequent awards, purchases, exhibitions and scholarships.
Thank you for your cooperation.